

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14278 291859Z

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2771

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 14278

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE CGEN UR US

SUBJECT: WELFARE OF ALAKSANDRAS SKOPAS

REF: MOSCOW 14188

1. AT 2300 ON SEPTEMBER 28 A MARINE GUARD DISCOVERED ALAKSANDRAS SKOPAS, A SENILE LITHUANIAN (REFTEL) SLEEPING IN A DARK, UNHEATED CELLAR HATCHWAY IN FREEZING TEMPERATURES. HE WAS HELPED TO A WARM ROOM IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION OF THE GROUND FLOOR WHERE HE SPENT THE NIGHT. IT NOW APPEARS TO US THAT SKOPAS HAS NOT BEEN LEAVING THE EMBASSY GROUNDS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS AS WE PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED, BUT INSTEAD HAS SLEPT IN HATCHWAYS, CELLARS AND OTHER ACCESSIBLE SPACE ON THE COMPOUND. HE HAS NOW RETURNED TO THE CONSULAR SECTION WHERE HE CAN SLEEP DURING THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 29.

2. MR SKOPAS IS ELDERLY (AGE 79), FORGETFUL AND INCON-HERENT IN HIS SPEECH. HE SEEMS UNABLE TO COMPREHEND SIMPLE QUESTIONS AND ACTS IN A DAZED, CONFUSED MANNER. WE HAVE TWO PRESSING CONCERNS: THE FIRST IS THAT HE MAY INJURE HIMSELF SERIOUSLY, PERHAPS FATALLY BY GOING TO SLEEP IN SOME UNHEATED PLACE IN THE COMPOUND IN FREEZING WEATHER. THE SECOND PROBLEM IS THAT MR. SKOPAS SMOKES,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 14278 291859Z

AND HE MAY INADVERTENTLY SET FIRE TO HIMSELF OR THE EMBASSY. BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUS FIRE IN THE CHANCERY LAST MONTH, EVERY INCH OF SPACE IN THE CHANCERY AND BACK COURTYARD IS FILLED WITH SUPPLIES, MANY OF WHICH ARE FLAMABLE.

3. SINCE WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LOCATE ANY AMERICAN RELATIVES

OF MR. SKOPAS, AND IN ANY EVENT HE IS UNABLE TO COMPREHEND THE PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING VYZOV AND FOLLOWING SOVIET REQUIREMENTS FOR EMIGRATION, WE SEE NO CHANCE OF HIS BEING TO EMIGRATE MOREOVER, HE CLEARLY NEEDS SOME SOCIAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE SOON FOR HIS OWN PROTECTION. THEREFORE, THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AN INFORMAL APPROACH TO THE USA DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, EXPLAINING MR. SKOPAS' SITUATION AND ASKING THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO DESIGNATE AN APPROPRIATE SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTION TO HELP MR. SKOPAS. BEFORE TAKING SUCH A STEP, HOWEVER, THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS AND GUIDANCE. MATLOCK

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